

# THE STORY OF EDISON

Interesting Life of the Genius Who Gave to the World the Electric Light, the Talking Machine and Moving Pictures.

### SUMMARY OF EDISON'S LIFE STORY

- 1847—Born February 11, at Milan, Ohio.
- 1854—Moved to Port Huron, Mich.
- 1857—Started chemical laboratory in cellar of home.
- 1859—Newsboy on Grand Trunk trains.
- 1862—Published "The Weekly Herald," on Grand Trunk trains. Saved life of son of station agent at Mt. Clemens, Mich. Boy's father teaches Edison telegraphy. Built amateur telegraph line and worked in railroad station.
- 1863—Worked as telegraph operator in various cities, always studying and improving telegraph apparatus. Granted first patent for vote recording machine.
- 1869—Reaches New York, penniless. Happened in stock ticker office just as apparatus breaks down. No one but Edison could fix it. Given position of superintendent at \$300 a month. Devises new and better stock tickers.
- 1890—Receiving first money, \$40,000 for ticker invention.
- 1871—Helps perfect a typewriter.
- 1872—Brought out many new inventions in telegraph apparatus. Opened Menlo Park laboratory.
- 1877—Invented telephone transmitter which made telephony commercially possible. Invented phonograph.
- 1879—Invented electric lamp. Produced entire electrical system, new machinery, instruments, etc.
- 1880—Experimented with first electric railway.
- 1891—Invented motion picture machine.
- 1893—1900—Produced new storage battery. Perfected concrete machinery and concrete houses.
- 1900—Made many new improvements to the talking machine and the phonograph.

The man who has astonished the world with his creative genius, who gave us such wonderful things as the electric light, the talking machine and motion pictures, was born at Milan, Ohio, February 11, 1847. It seems but a few years ago, in the hurried flight of time, when Tom Edison was selling newspapers on the Grand Trunk trains, calling out the headlines of Civil War battles, when he was an itinerant, penniless telegraph operator, traveling from city to city, a poor and sometimes hungry. Today he is the greatest American genius the foremost inventor, the hero of industry, the best known and most honored man in the world.

Samuel Edison, the father of Thomas, kept a hotel at Vienna, Canada, on Lake Erie. He married Miss Nancy Elliott, a school teacher, in 1828. Samuel Edison took part in the revolt against England, and because of this removed to Milan, Ohio, in 1842, where Thomas Alva was born in 1847. As a boy Edison was not strong and, therefore, did not go to school as soon as most boys of that day. It was at the time the family moved to Port Huron, Mich., Samuel Edison was active in the grain and lumber business and prospered. The family was well-to-do and prominent in the society of the community.

**Edison Declared a Dunce.**  
About this time Thomas Alva started bravely out to school. For three months he stood patiently at the feet of his class, then his teachers gave him up in despair. He was sent home and one of the instructors confided to Edison's father that the boy was a dunce. Edison never ventured inside a school house after that trying experience. His mother took up the task of the boy's education and how well she succeeded has been evidenced in later years. In the cellar of his home Edison installed his first "laboratory," where he performed certain dubious chemical experiments and tested out the formulas encountered in his scientific reading. It was to secure money for these experiments that Edison turned newsboy and in 1859 he began selling papers on the trains of the Grand Trunk between Port Huron and Detroit. Nearly all the profits from this enterprise went to support his laboratory and chemical experiments. And very soon he had installed in the baggage car a small laboratory where he could experiment during the leisure hours of the daily run. Because of an accident in his laboratory which set fire to the car, Edison was thrown out of the train and this ended his career as a newsboy.

Edison also established "The Weekly Herald," the first newspaper ever printed on a moving train, which he ran for some time to augment his earnings from the sale of newspapers. About this time he saved from death the young son of J. Mackenzie, the station agent at Mount Clemens, Mich., and in gratitude the father taught Edison telegraphy. Edison put up a small telegraph line between his home and that of a boy friend. Thus began the long years when Edison worked at telegraphy and traveled all over the country. For five years Edison drifted from place to place working at his trade, never staying long in any one city. Some of his experiences in those roving days, as related by Edison today, are very laughable.

In 1868 Edison drifted to Boston. He was one of the best telegraphers in the business and being possessed of an inventive and scientific turn of mind it was not surprising that he should begin to develop new and better telegraph apparatus. In the Boston office of the Western Union he began his experiments and study necessary for perfecting his duplex system of telegraphy. On the 11th day of October, 1868, he was granted his first patent for an electrical vote recorder. He tried to get Congress interested in this, but failed. From Boston he went to New York. He did not have a cent with which to buy breakfast. He landed in the big city poor and in debt. An old associate loaned him a dollar. For days he haunted the telegraph offices looking for work. One day he happened in the offices of the Gold & Stock Telegraph Company just when their system broke down. For a time the various employees of the place tried to adjust the mechanism while the rooms were besieged with messengers from brokers' offices demanding that the service be restored. At last Edison volunteered to help and soon had the system in order. As a result of this he was given a job as superintendent at \$300 a month, more money than he had ever received before.

**Edison Sells First Invention.**  
Soon after this Edison went into partnership with Franklin L. Pope as electrical engineers and began to make new and improved stock tickers. In 1870 the Gold & Stock Telegraph Company made Edison an offer for his numerous improvements and inventions relating to tickers. Edison determined to ask for \$5,000 but quickly dropped to \$3,000, and when the time came he could not even name this sum and asked the company to make him an offer. Their first offer was for \$40,000 and Edison says he came as near fainting as he ever did. They gave him a check for this amount but he had never cashed a check before. Being deaf he did not hear what the paying teller said about an endorsement and turned away from the window with the idea he had been cheated. When they told him to endorse the check, and sent a man along to identify him, Edison received the money, all in small bills which quite filled his pockets. He then went to his home in Newark and sat up all night with the money for fear it might

be stolen. The next day a friend showed him how to deposit the money in a bank and open a check account. Now began the years of Edison's greatest activities when he worked 20 hours a day, studying maps on work benches, in corridors and wherever he could. From 1869, the date of his first patent, up to the summer of 1910 no fewer than 1,328 separate patents have been applied for in his name. The highest number of patents were in 1882 when 141 patents were applied for. He perfected automatic telegraphy, made a successful typewriter, perfected a device whereby four messages could be sent over the same wire, invented the phonograph and then spent several years working at the new telephone apparatus, perfecting the receiver.

**Becomes Interested in Electric Lamp.**  
"The idea struck me all of a sudden," said Edison when in a reminiscence mood. "In those days there were a few arc lamps. It was easy to see what electric lighting needed—it wanted to be subdivided. The light was too bright and too big. What we wanted was little lights, and to distribute them to people's houses like gas."

This was the gigantic problem to which Edison addressed his energy and genius, in spite of the fact that the greatest engineers and scientists of the world had declared the task impossible. Edison's attempts were called childish and impossible. There were plenty who openly declared that Edison and his associates were trying to make money out of the public with a "wild cat" scheme.

**Undaunted Perseverance.**  
In the face of all this adverse criticism, Edison pursued the even tenor of his way, investigating and experimenting. As Edison says, "Impossible is an impossible word." Day after day and far into the watches of the night, he and his associates adhered to their research, snatching hasty meals at odd times and sleeping among the ropes and buckets in the "cave" under the stairs or stretched exhausted on some laboratory table. Of the investigation that was carried on, before a suitable lamp filament was discovered, Edison merely said: "We saw that carbon was what we wanted. The next questioner was, what kind of carbon? I began to try various things and finally carried a strip of bamboo from a Japanese fan and found what we were seeking."

**The Birth of the Lamp.**  
Of the hour of victory, the birth of the Edison lamp on October 21, 1879, Edison says: "We sat and looked at the lamp continued to burn, and the longer it burned the more fascinated we were. None of us could go to bed, and there was no sleep for over forty hours. We sat and just watched it with anxiety and growing elation."  
The discovery of the incandescent lamp was but a small part of the task which confronted Edison in those busy days. It was necessary for him to produce a complete lighting system with lamps, conductors, insulators, measuring instruments, dynamo, switch boards, etc.

There was no dynamo, or generator, suitable for Edison's new lighting system, so the first thing he did was to go to work and invent a new and better generator than the electricians had ever dreamed of before. There were no steam engines large enough, or fast enough to run the new generators, so Edison helped the steam engineers to devise and make new and better engines.

**The First Central Station.**  
Edison, speaking of this period, said, "I had the central station in mind all the time, I wanted to use 110 volts. Now, there is no use for you to ask me why, because I do not know, but somehow that figure stuck in my mind, and I had calculated that if we could get the voltage up that high, the copper cost would be somewhere in sight."

In regard to installing his first central station—the old Pearl Street station in New York City—he said: "You cannot imagine how hard it was. There was nothing that we could buy or that anybody could make for us. There were no high-speed engines, and the manufacturers said they were impossible."  
Mr. Porter (of the old Porter-Allen Engine Company) built for Edison his first high-speed engine, of 150 horsepower and 700 revolutions per minute. Edison says: "We set the machine up in the old shop, and as we had some idea of what might happen, we tied a chain round the throttle valve and ran it out through a window into the wood shed, where we stood to work it. It ran, oh, yes, it ran. Every time she turned over, she shook the firmament, and tried to lift the whole hill with her. Toned down to 350 revolutions,

she ran satisfactorily, and everybody said, 'Why, how beautifully she runs and how practical such an engine is.' Now, don't you know, I knew that they would say that? Didn't you ever find out that trying to do the impossible makes about half the impossible seem easy?"  
While this work was going on in the shop underground mains were being laid in New York. "During this period," says Edison, "I used to sleep nights on piles of pipe in the station." Finally, the great day for trying out the system arrived. "We started one engine and all was well, and we had 500 ohms resistance. Then we started another engine, and threw them in parallel. Of all the circuses since Adam was born, we had the worst then. One engine would stop and the other would run up to about 1,000 revolutions. Then they would see-saw. When the circus began, the gang bolted, and kept running for a couple of blocks. What was the matter? Why it was those darn Porter governors." By connecting all the governors together, the engines were finally made to behave.  
Once, when a heavy load was unexpectedly thrown on, Edison called up his station and inquired "How is it at the station?" The reply came back, "Oh, bully! Everything is red hot, and the ammeter has made two revolutions."

**Lack of Instruments.**  
Of switchboard instruments there were none. In his early work, Edison said, "We used to hang up a shingle nail—tied it alongside of a feeder, and that was our heavy current ammeter. It worked all right. When the nail came close to the feeder, we screwed the rheostat a little, and kept the lamps in the station looking about right."

While Edison was building his first electric lighting plant in New York City, another and smaller plant was being completed in Appleton, Wis. This was a small plant, the generator being driven by water power from a turbine

## LUMBERTON'S NEW BANK A STRONG INSTITUTION

(Continued From Page Eight.)  
Mr. Stephens was well advanced in age, having for many years been a minister of the gospel. The funeral was conducted from Mt. Elm church this morning at 11 o'clock.  
Mr. W. S. Britt will leave Monday for Kershaw, S. C., where on Wednesday he will be married. After an extended bridal trip North, Mr. and Mrs. Britt will be at home to their friends in Lumberton.

Mr. and Mrs. S. F. Caldwell left Wednesday night for Pulaski, Va. Mrs. Caldwell's former home. She will spend some time with relatives, but Mr. Caldwell will return next week.  
Cotton has been coming in freely all the week, the price causing many farmers to sell without waiting and taking chances.

Fresh eggs, old eggs, stale eggs, eggs of any kind are now selling here for 30 cents a dozen. Few are to be had at any price.  
Mr. Fred T. Skipper, of Wilmington, arrived this morning to spend two or three days with relatives. Mr. Skipper is a nephew of the late Mrs. Ellen Linkhaw, and had not been here since he attended her funeral several years ago. He finds great improvement.

Mr. Marcus Jacobi, of Wilmington, was here last night. He has many friends here who are always glad to see him.  
Congressman Godwin was here for a few hours yesterday evening.  
A class of chorists from the Oxford Orphanage will give an entertainment in the opera house next Tuesday night.

The plant furnished current for but a few incandescent lamps but it has the honor of being the first commercial incandescent lighting installation in the world.

night, 19th, and as usual will be greeted by a full house.  
Mrs. Lizzie Proctor and daughter, Mrs. E. R. Carlyle, have returned from San Antonio, Texas.  
Miss Lillian Ferguson delightfully entertained a number of her young friends last night. W. S. W.

### UNFORTUNATES SEE CIRCUS.

Students of Caswell Training School Attend Performance at Kinston.  
(Special Star Correspondence.)  
Kinston, N. C., Oct. 16.—There sat in a reserved section at a circus here Thursday a lot of folks for whom the occasion was an epoch. The manager, hearing from Postmaster LaRogue of the Caswell Training school, the State institution for the feeble minded near here, invited the unfortunates there—mostly children—to see a performance as the management's guests. Superintendent McNairy gladly accepted the invitation for the little ones and the attendants escorted them to the tent. Many of them had never seen a circus before. Some of them did not understand all that they saw. But it seemed as though Providence had contrived for each little face and every quaint little mind a smile and appreciation.

Al Goldsboro the day before the orphans from the Odd Fellows' home were similarly entertained.  
**BUD FISHER COMING.**  
To Spend a Few Days at Havelock, N. C., Before Long.  
(Special Star Correspondence.)  
Kinston, N. C., Oct. 16.—"Bud" Fisher, originator of the "Mutt and Jeff," is expected to spend a few days at the Havelock hunting camp in Craven county before long. Fisher visited the camp several years ago.

**Hazel Dawn**  
In "The Heart of Jennifer" (Paramount) Royal tomorrow.  
(Advertisement.)

# Dress Up!

By LIVY S. RICHARD

Very wise was Shakespeare. You remember he wrote: "The apparel oft proclaims the man."

Judge for yourself if this isn't true. How do YOU "size up" a man the first time you see him?

Not by his Brains. It takes time for them to come to a show down.

Not by his Character. Character can't be snap shotted.

You judge him, you have to judge him, first off, by his Appearance—and that means more than the hang of his jaw or the cut of his hair; it also means whether his clothes fit and whether he dresses in good taste.

Rockefeller, Wilson, Edison, any man whose money or reputation is made, can wear any old thing and folks will either not notice the slouchiness because of thinking of what they know he has done or they will charge it up to the "whims of genius."

Incidentally, Wilson and Rockefeller are both good dressers.

But YOU, Mr. Average Man, haven't got the "genius" excuse. YOUR renown has yet to be accumulated. So it's very decidedly wise for you to put your best foot foremost.

I was in a great department store the other day watching the waiting line at the employment office. Dozens of eager youth longed to plant their feet on the first rungs of a career that would ladder them up among the Wanamakers, Marshall Fields, Filenes.

Who do you suppose lost out?

In every instance the fellow who looked shabby and dress-careless.

The employment manager told me afterward he didn't judge applicants' clothing by its quality.

"It may be cheap, because when a fellow's poor he, of course, can't buy broadcloth," he said. "But, it's got to be neat, clean and indicative of good taste. I can't take chances on a youngster who doesn't think enough of appearances to take pains not to look mussy."

So take a friendly tip, dear sir and brother.

DRESS UP!

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Since the Announcement of the

# Packard TWIN-SIX

there has been a tremendous advance in the cost of most of our raw materials, especially leather, aluminum, high grades of steel, etc. We cannot continue present prices except at a loss.

It is, of course, out of the question to compromise Packard quality—which has been maintained steadfastly for sixteen years. Consequently we have adopted the only alternative and advanced the prices by the amount of the increase in the cost of materials.

These new prices for Packard Twin-Six cars cannot and will not be reduced during the current season. They are as follows:

	The 1-35	The 1-25
Seven-Passenger Touring Car . . . . .	\$3150	\$2750
Seven-Passenger Salon Touring Car . . . . .	3150	2750
Six-Passenger Salon Touring Car . . . . .	3150	None
Five-Passenger Phaeton . . . . .	3150	2750
Five-Passenger Salon Phaeton . . . . .	3150	2750
Two-Passenger Runabout . . . . .	None	2750
Seven-Passenger Imperial Limousine . . . . .	4800	None
Seven-Passenger Salon Limousine . . . . .	4750	None
Seven-Passenger Limousine with Cab Sides . . . . .	4650	None
Seven-Passenger Limousine without Cab Sides . . . . .	4600	None
Seven-Passenger Landaulet with Cab Sides . . . . .	4650	None
Six-Passenger Limousine without Cab Sides . . . . .	4550	4150
Six-Passenger Landaulet without Cab Sides . . . . .	4550	4150
Four-Passenger Brougham . . . . .	4600	4200
Three-Passenger Coupe . . . . .	None	3700
Chassis Only . . . . .	2650	2350

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Now Ready for Your Inspection.  
the NEWEST and BEST at  
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—Opposite Murchison Bank—

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Following out the "Rotary" idea, Mr. Moore and his committee insist that the money that stays in Wilmington is the only money that really helps build the city. That being the case, patronize the  
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Brick Manufacturers and Building Material  
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